making efforts to get stays vacated and filing urgent hearing petitions in the Supreme Court and Appellate Tribunals for deciding the cases on priority basis.

(b) Government is aware of the news-item which appeared in the Pioneer dated 14th July, 2001.

(c) The Income Tax Act provides for arrest and detention of an assessee in prison in suitable cases, if the assessee is in default in making payment of taxes. In respect of customs duty, strict action is taken under Section 142 of the Customs Act, 1962 for recovery of sums due to the Government. Similarly, sufficient provisions have been made in Central Excise Law to recover the tax arrears. These include detaining of goods, and sale of movable and immovable properties of the defaulters.

Retrenchment in Central Customs and Excise Department

†1785. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 5.2 per cent retrenchment of employees of Central Customs and Excise Department will be effected retrenching thereby 3600 employees out of 68761;

(b) whether this retrenchment would be effective on Class III and Class IV employees or on officers as well;

(c) whether it is an injustice to the lowly paid employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir. However, the re-structuring plan of Customs and Central Excise Department approved by the Government envisages abolition of 3600 posts vacant or to fall vacant when existing incumbents are promoted or retire. There will be no retrenchment of existing staff.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Inflation in the Economy

†1786. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank's assistance is becoming

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

mandatory to overcome the crisis of balance of payment in the wake of the country being once again under the pressure of inflation during the year 2001-2002; and

(b) if so, the reasons that have led to this situation and the details of action taken by Government to solve this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) No, Sir. India's Balance of Payments (BoP) position in 2001-02 is expected to remain well manageable. In fact, there has been a net accretion to foreign exchange reserves of US $ 1450 million in 2001-02 up to July 31, 2001. World Bank assistance, as in the past, will continue to be an important, though not a major, source of support to India's BoP.

(b) The country's balance of payments position is monitored closely both by the Government and the Reserve Bank of India and appropriate measures are taken, when necessary, to increase the growth of exports and invisible receipts and to enhance the level of non-debt creating capital flows, particularly of foreign investments, so as to help maintain a viable balance of payments position and an adequate level of foreign exchange reserves.

Action against officers of cooperative bank of Gujarat

1787. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the panic created in Gujarat due to failure of a co-operative bank;

(b) the action being taken by the RBI to protect the interest of investors in general and small investors in particular;

(c) the action being taken against the officers who violated all banking norms and made available bank money to share brokers at Kolkata and Mumbai; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken for recovery of money?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The sudden rush for withdrawal of deposits beginning 9th March, 2001 and closure of Madhavpura Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd. (MMCB) on 13th March, 2001 had created large-scale panic amongst